

Claims 1, 7, 10, 15, and 25 have been amended, no claims have been cancelled and no new claims have been added.

Applicant respectfully affirms the election of the invention of Group I.

Applicant respectfully traverses the objection to the drawings in light of the amendment of page 24 of the specification (changing “26” to “36”) and the proposed drawing correction submitted herewith deleting reference numeral 40.

Applicant respectfully traverses the objection to the disclosure in light of the amendment of page 17 of the specification and on the grounds that the high molecular weight ethoxylated polyester (HMWEP) serves as both a lubricant and soil release agent. U.S. Patent No. 5,935,484 describes HMWEP's for example in column 3, lines 35 – 56, and the same language is found on page 21, lines 3 – 17 of the present application. Also, Claim 7 mentions that HMWEP is a lubricant. It is clear in the present application that at least one embodiment of the present invention is directed to treating yarn and/or fabric with an anionic-ethoxylated sulfonated polyester (AESP) and a HMWEP. Hence, U.S. Patent 5,935,484 teaches use of HMWEP (a lubricant) and the teachings of the present specification clearly call for an HMWEP.

Applicant respectfully traverses the objection of Claim 7 in light of the amendment of Claim 7 deleting the phrases in parentheses.

Applicant respectfully traverses the objection of Claims 10, 15, and 25 in light of the amendment thereof adding “selected from the group consisting” between “one” and “of”.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Section 112 rejection of Claims 7 – 10 on the grounds that page 21, lines 9 – 14 teach HMWEP's having a molecular weight of at least 500, and in light of the amendment of Claim 10 deleting the word “chemically”.

Applicant respectfully traverses the obviousness-type double patenting rejection of Claims 1 – 15, 24 and 25 on the grounds that the fabric of the Hepfinger 5,916,273 fabric was developed to replace cotton drape fabric and to avoid the problems associated with hydrophilic cotton drape fabric (stretch, creep, etc.) It is the inventors of the present application who discovered that this heretofore drape fabric could be treated to be hydrophilic and used for another purpose.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Section 103(a) rejection of Claims 1 – 15, 24 and 25 over Scheller and Schuette et al. on the grounds that Scheller (4,712,281) discloses a true pile fabric formed by a knitting machine having a pile forming device, while the present invention is directed to a dimensionally stable, plush fabric (not true pile, no discernable pile loop, relatively flat) having a plush surface formed by napping, sanding, brushing, or the like, and in light of the amendment of Claim 1 adding “in a dimensionally stable stitch pattern” following “ground yarns”.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Section 103(a) rejection of Claims 1 – 6, 11 – 15, 24 and 25 over Hepfinger and Schuette et al. in light of the amendment of Claim 1, the above comments regarding the Hepfinger fabric, and on the grounds that the references themselves lack a specific suggestion or motivation for the combination thereof.

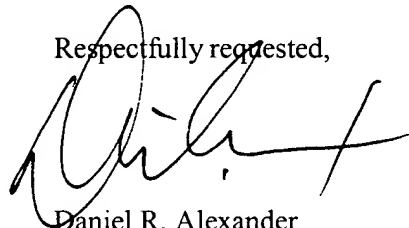
In light of the above, Applicant respectfully believes that at least Claims 1 – 15, 24 and 25 are in condition for allowance.

Should any matter of form or language stand in the way of allowance of the present application, the undersigned respectfully requests a telephone conference to resolve such issues.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any other fee as may be required for timely acceptance of this Amendment and to credit any surplus to Deposit Account No. 04-0500. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

June 14, 2002
MILLIKEN & COMPANY
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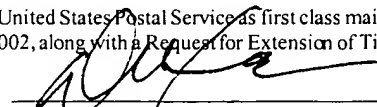
Respectfully requested,



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231, on June 14, 2002, along with a Request for Extension of Time, and a postcard receipt.


Daniel R. Alexander
Attorney for Applicant(s)

MARKED UP COPYIN THE SPECIFICATION

Page 24, **replace** the paragraph at lines 9 – 12 with the following:

With reference to Figure 4 of the drawings, upper surface 38 of a fabric piece [26] 36 (sanded technical back) may be textured by creating surface formations such as grooves, recesses, or the like. It is evident that such surface formations provide increased surface area, absorbency, etc.

Page 17, **replace** the paragraph at lines 9 – 16 with the following:

Advantageously, the yarn and/or fabric is chemically treated to render it hydrophilic. For example, the fabric may be treated with an anionic-ethoxylated sulfonated polyester (AESP, surfactant/stabilizer agent) and a high molecular weight ethoxylated polyester (HMWEP, lubricant/softener agent). This treatment allows the polyester fabric to absorb water very rapidly and promotes wicking, water transport, and dissipating through the fabric, and liquid retention, with the result that the surface of the fabric quickly feels dry to the touch. The treatment also helps to prevent staining, improves washing performance and reduces creating.

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A warp-knitted fabric of at least three-bar construction, said fabric comprised of multifilament synthetic pile yarns on the technical back which are raised or broken to produce a plush surface, and monofilament synthetic ground yarns in a dimensionally stable stitch pattern on a technical face, wherein at least one of said yarns and fabric are hydrophilic.
7. (Amended) The fabric of Claim 1, wherein at least one of said yarns and fabric are chemically treated with an anionic-ethoxylated sulfonated polyester [(surfactant/stabilizer agent)]and a high molecular weight ethoxylated polyester [(lubricant/softener agent)].

10. (Amended) The fabric of Claim 7, wherein at least one of said yarns and fabric is [chemically] treated by at least one selected from the group consisting of adding an anti-pathogenic agent, dyeing, scouring, optically brightening, bulking, and combinations thereof.
15. (Amended) The fabric of Claim 1, wherein the fabric is at least one selected from the group consisting of absorbent, wicking, hydrophilic, printable, launderable, cleanable, durable, dimensionally stable, non-fraying, color fast, and combinations thereof.
25. (Amended) The fabric of Claim 24, wherein the fabric is at least one selected from the group consisting of absorbent, wicking, hydrophilic, printable, launderable, durable, dimensionally stable, non-fraying, color fast, and combinations thereof.